

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 00814 01 OF 02 132056Z

63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

SS-15 NSC-05 OIC-02 SAM-01 AEC-05 /069 W

----- 019718

R 131830Z FEB 75

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0110

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INFO USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 0814

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJ: NAC MEETING FEB 13, 1975 - US BRIEFING ON EXERCISE RE-
FORGER 74

REF: A. USNATO 0195 B. USNATO 0704 C. STATE 032846 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY AT COUNCIL MEETING FEB 13 US TEAM FROM USAREUR LED
BY DEPUTY COMMANDER IN CHIEF LT GEN ALMQUIST, PRESENTED
EXCELLENT BRIEFING ON REFORGER 74. COUNCIL RESPONDED WITH
GENUINE INTEREST AND KNOWLEDGEABLE QUESTIONS. MISSION CON-
SIDERS THAT THIS BRIEFING EFFECTIVELY REINFORCED PREVIOUS
AIRLIFT BRIEFING AND SERVED TO HELP FOCUS PERMREPS' ATTENTION
ON PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITY.
END SUMMARY.

1. SYG LUNS OPENED NAC WITH BRIEF REFERENCE TO 1966/67 TRI-
LATERAL TALKS WHICH LED TO RETURN OF CERTAIN US AND UK FORCES
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NATO 00814 01 OF 02 132056Z

TO THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES. UK FORCES LATER RETURNED TO
FRG, AND US AGREED TO FRG FOR ANNUAL EXERCISES
WHICH HAVE BECOME A REGULAR DEMONSTRATION OF US COMMITMENT.
HE REMINDED COUNCIL OF MGEN CASEY'S AIRLIFT BRIEFING ON JAN 15

(REF A) AND NOTED REFORGER WAS FIRM EVIDENCE OF THIS IMPRESSIVE CAPABILITY. IN INTRODUCING LT GEN ALMQUIST AND BRIEFING TEAM, BRUCE (US) ADDED THAT US CONSIDERS REFORGER SERIES AS ONE OF OUR MOST SIGNIFICANT EXERCISES AND ANOTHER PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION OF AIRLIFT WHICH COUNCIL HEARD ABOUT FROM MGEN CASEY. BEYOND THE OPERATIONAL ASPECTS, HE CONTINUED, REFORGER EMPHASIZES THE CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE CAPABILITY OF THE ALLIANCE. IT IS A TANGIBLE EXPRESSION OF ONE LEG OF THE TRAIAD AND, IN THIS WAY, CONTRIBUTES DIRECTLY TO DEFENSE.

2. BRIEFING ITSELF WAS A POLISHED AND EFFECTIVE SUMMARY OF REFORGER 74, HIGHLIGHTING THE BASIC CONCEPT OF THE EXERCISE, EXECUTION, AND LESSONS LEARNED. AIRLIFT CAPABILITY AND READINESS OF PRE-POSITIONED EQUIPMENT WERE ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY AS WAS, ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF BAD WEATHER ON CLOSE AIR SUPPORT; ONLY F-111'S WERE CONSISTENTLY ABLE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT. THIS BRIEFING WAS ESSENTIALLY SAME MILITARY COMMITTEE HEARD ON DEC 5, 1974.

3. PERMREPS RESPONDED TO BRIEFING WITH EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION AND SEVERAL POINTED QUESTIONS. DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM) COMMENTED THAT THE PRE-POSITIONED STORAGE SITES SEEM EXTREMELY VULNERABLE. HE ASKED IF US ENVISAGES THEIR USE ONLY DURING ALERT STAGE OR AFTER WAR HAS BEGUN. LT GEN ALMQUIST ANSWERED WE WOULD HOPE TO MOVE TROOPS AND ISSUE EQUIPMENT BEFORE HOSTILITIES JOINED. US HAS SOME EIGHT OF THESE SITES AND, IF NECESSARY WE COULD ISSUE EQUIPMENT FOUR TIMES AS FAST AS DURING REFORGER WHERE PEACETIME ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND LIMITED NUMBER OF INITIAL UNIT ASSEMBLY AREAS SLOWED PROCESS DOWN.

4. MENZIES (CANADA) NOTED HE HAD ATTENDED LAST TWO REFORGER EXERCISES AND ASKED THREE QUESTIONS:

A. CONSIDERING THAT PRE-POSITIONED SITES HAVE EQUIPMENT FOR ABOUT TWO AND ONE-HALF DIVISIONS, AND REFORGER ONLY CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NATO 00814 01 OF 02 132056Z

USES PART OF IT, DOES THE US ROTATE THIS EQUIPMENT WITHIN USAREUR OR JUST KEEP IT NEW FOR FLYOVERS? LT GEN ALMQUIST REPLIED THAT WE ISSUE DIFFERENT EQUIPMENT EACH YEAR SO AFTER 3 OR 4 REFORGERS ALL EQUIPMENT RECEIVES USE AND OVERHAUL. WE OVERHAUL EQUIPMENT EVERY THREE YEARS IN ANY CASE AND WE WOULD NOT ALLOW THIS EQUIPMENT TO BECOME OBSOLESCEMENT WITHOUT REPLACEMENT.

B. CONCERNING FAMILIARITY WITH THE LOCAL TERRAIN, DOES THE US SEND OVER A FEW TROOPS FROM TIME TO TIME TO RECONNOITER THE AREA OR DO WE ATTACH PERSONNEL ALREADY ASSIGNED TO USAREUR UNITS TO REFORGER UNITS? LT GEN ALMQUIST REPLIED THAT THIS WAS ONE OF MORE SERIOUS PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND A PRIMARY LESSON FROM REFORGERUR. DURING THE FIELD TRAINING

EXERCISE, HIGHER COMMANDS TOOK TOO MUCH TIME TO REACT AND THEREBY LIMITED COMPANY LEVEL FORCES' OPPORTUNITY TO GET OUT IN FIELD AND BECOME FAMILIAR WITH TERRAIN. THIS POINTED TO NEED FOR TIMELY WARNING ORDERS. USAREUR IS WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM AND THAT OF TERRAIN FAMILIARITY AS WELL.

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PAGE 01 NATO 00814 02 OF 02 132044Z

63

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SS-15 NSC-05 OIC-02 SAM-01 AEC-05 /069 W

----- 019554

R 131830Z FEB 75

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USNATO 0814

C. CONCERNING MORE FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT OF REFORGER FORCES, MENZIES NOTED THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER HAS EMPHASIZED FLEXIBILITY AND NOW A POSSIBILITY EXISTS OF US STATIONING SOME FORCES IN NORTHAG AREA. MENZIES ASKED IF USAREUR IS CONSTRAINED TO SAME REFORGER OPERATING AREA YEAR AFTER YEAR AND IS USAREUR CONDUCTING CPX'S (COMMAND POST

EXERCISES) IN OTHER AREAS? LT GEN ALMQUIST REPLIED THAT EXERCISES ARE FAIRLY WELL CONSTRAINED TO CENTAG. USAREUR DOES PARTICIPATE IN CPX'S WITH FRG AND CANADIAN FORCES BUT, IN GENERAL, TROOPS ARE NOT TOO FAMILIAR WITH NORTHAG AREA.

5. CATALANO (ITALY) RECOGNIZED REFORGER WAS NOT A TEST OF SPEED BUT ASKED IF ONE DAY IT WOULDN'T BE A GOOD IDEA TO TEST THE SPEED WITH WHICH US COULD ACCOMPLISH A REFORGER. LT GEN ALMQUIST ANSWERED THAT WE COULD SPEED IT UP IF WE ELIMINATED ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES SUCH AS PAPER WORK AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN ISSUING EQUIPMENT TO REFORGER TROOPS AND
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PAGE 02 NATO 00814 02 OF 02 132044Z

IF THE FRG PROVIDED MORE INITIAL UNIT ASSEMBLY AREAS. HE NOTED THAT DEPLOYMENT PHASE WAS ONLY SEVEN DAYS ANYWAY.

6. HARTOGH (THE NETHERLANDS) NOTED THAT "THE OTHER SIDE" MUST HAVE HAD A GREAT INTEREST IN REFORGER. DID WE NOTICE THIS INTEREST AND WHAT MEANS DID WE USE TO DO SO? WHAT LESSONS DID WE PROVIDE FOR THEM? LT GEN ALMQUIST REPLIED THAT WARSAW PACT IS INTERESTED IN REFORGER AND WE NOTICED AN INCREASE IN ELECTRONIC WARFARE (EW) ACTIVITY. HOWEVER, THIS ACTIVITY FELL OFF MORE QUICKLY THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS; MAYBE THE WP IS GETTING USED TO REFORGER. HE REMARKED WE ALSO READ THEIR SIGNALS DURING WP EXERCISES.

7. SVART (DENMARK) ASKED HOW MUCH EXERCISE TRAFFIC IS IN THE CLEAR. LT GEN ALMQUIST REPLIED THAT WE DO HAVE A WEAKNESS IN THIS AREA BELOW CORPS LEVEL WHICH THE US IS TRYING TO WORK OUT. CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE: THE AVAILABLE ENEMY

REACTION TIME TO AN INTERCEPT FROM A SMALL TACTICAL UNIT; AND THE COST OF SECURE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.

8. SIR PETER HILL-NORTON (CHAIRMAN MILITARY COMMITTEE) NOTED THAT REFORGER PROVIDED NATO ANOTHER LESSON ON USE OF WARNING TIME. THE OBJECT WAS "TO GET THIS LOT TO EUROPE IN TIME". REFERRING TO JAN 15 US AIRLIFT BRIEFING, HE NOTED IT TOOK 19 DAYS TO GET A DIVISION TO EUROPE AND THAT SECDEF WAS TRYING TO GET THIS DOWN TO SEVEN DAYS. CONCERNING REFORGER 75, SIR PETER REMARKED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A COMMUNICATION FROM US AUTHORITIES (A MEMORANDUM FROM US MILREP) WHICH DISCUSSED SOME PLANNING ASPECTS. THE US WAS CONSIDERING EXTENDING REFORGER 75 TO BECOME A NATO EXERCISE UNDER THE SUPREME COMMANDER; USING DIFFERENT EXERCISE AREAS; AND USING THE NEW AAFCE COMMAND TO EXCHANGE AIR ASSETS BETWEEN AREAS.

9. MENZIES TOOK THE FLOOR TO ASK ONE MORE QUESTION. HE NOTED THAT CANADA'S CF-104 AIRCRAFT WERE OFTEN NOT ABLE TO CONDUCT CLOSE AIR SUPPORT BECAUSE OF WEATHER. HE WONDERED

IF US ENCOUNTERED SIMILAR PROBLEMS WITH HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS AND, IN GENERAL, WHAT LESSONS FOR CLOSE AIR SUPPORT DID WE LEARN - BESIDES BUYING F-111'S. LT GEN ALMQUIST ANSWERED CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NATO 00814 02 OF 02 132044Z

THAT WEATHER ALSO HINDERED USE OF HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS BUT NOT TO THE EXTENT OF THE CLOSE AIR SUPPORT AIRCRAFT. HE NOTED THAT THE US HAS AN AGGRESSIVE PROGRAM UNDERWAY AT FORT RUCKER TO ENHANCE THE ALL-WEATHER CAPABILITY OF HELO GUNSHIPS. HE EXPECTS TO SEE SOME REAL PROGRESS IN THIS AREA OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

10. SYG LUNS ASKED THE FINAL QUESTION. DID USAREUR HAVE
A CHANCE TO OBSERVE CANADA'S NEW CENTURION TANKS IN ACTION
AND HOW DID THEY DO? US BRIEFING OFFICER REPLIED THAT HE
HAD ONLY SEEN THEM ONCE AND THEY "SEEMED TO BE MOVING ALONG
NICELY". PERMREPS APPRECIATED THE HUMOR.

1. COMMENT: MISSION BELIEVES THIS BRIEFING WAS A VALUABLE
CONTRIBUTION TO OUR EFFORTS TO EMPHASIZE CONVENTIONAL WARFARE
CAPABILITY. IT WILL ALSO HELP LAY A FOUNDATION FOR PROGRESS
IN RELATED AREAS SUCH AS CIVIL RESERVE AIR FLEET (CRAF).
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 18 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NATO00814
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750286/abbrzifi.tel
Line Count: 230
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. USNATO 0195 B. USNATO 0704 C. STATE 032846 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 APR 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <28 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAC MEETING FEB 13, 1975 - US BRIEFING ON EXERCISE RE- FORGER 74
TAGS: MPOL, NATO
To: STATE
SECDEF INFO USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR
USLOSACLANT
CINCLANT
CINCUSAREUR

CINCUSAFE
CINCUSNAVEUR

Type: TE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006